



Homeland Security Grant Awarded to City of Tupelo Bomb Squad *\$50,000 to be used for readiness training*

Tupelo, Miss. (May 09, 2012) – A \$50,000 grant has been awarded to the City of Tupelo bomb squad for training and other needs associated with bomb threat readiness. The grant was presented by the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety.

The grant is part of a \$200 million federal program being administered by the United States Department of Homeland Security. The program is intended to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities at the state, local, and community levels as part of a comprehensive national emergency management system. Tupelo is one of only four cities in Mississippi with a bomb team, which is specially trained and equipped to respond to emergencies involving explosive devices or volatile materials.

“Homeland security begins with our law enforcement and first responders in communities all over Mississippi,” said J.W. Ledbetter, Director of the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security. “These funds are used to enhance and improve our readiness for responding to a wide variety of threats and crisis.”

Ledbetter said the United States Department of Homeland Security has directed state Homeland Security affiliates to use the funding to enhance existing capabilities within individual states for responding to acts of domestic and international terrorism, use of weapons of mass destruction and biochemical agents.

The grant program is part of a federal plan for ‘All-Hazard’ response planning, beginning at local levels. The aim is to improve response capabilities for catastrophic natural disasters, potential for weapons of mass destruction, acts of terrorism, and chemical/biological/radiological/nuclear/explosive incidents. The initiative also improves local response capabilities for traffic agents, fires and other emergencies.

The Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, a division of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, in fiscal year 2011 will distribute more than \$5.29 million in Homeland Security Grant Program funding in Mississippi for training and equipment.

For more information go to www.homelandsecurity.ms.gov.

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